

**12 June 2014****MEDIA RELEASE****Grain exporters refunded \$4.7 million**

Grain exporters will receive a refund of \$4.7 million on fees and charges, following the introduction of accounting systems which clearly reflect the actual costs of export inspection and certification.

Grain Trade Australia (GTA), which is a member of the Department of Agriculture Grain and Plant Product Export Industry Consultative Committee, says it's a tribute to the transparency and efficiency of the new systems.

"A few years ago the industry reviewed and modelled the fees being paid along the supply chain for export certification and established a clearer picture of where the costs were incurred," said GTA Chief Executive Officer Geoff Honey.

"Coupled with record shipping programs, this allowed a 25 per cent reduction in fees overall, which came into effect in May this year.

"However, on top of this, there are currently surplus funds held within the grain export program of the Department's biosecurity program, and this has led to the refund."

Tonnage and establishment registration charges paid in 2012/2013 will be refunded in full, with processing to be complete by 30 June 2014.

Mr Honey says the Minister for Agriculture, Barnaby Joyce, is to be congratulated in responding in such a timely and responsive manner.

"The Grain Export Certification Reform Program provided detailed financial modelling showing exactly where costs are borne and therefore cost recovery is needed.

"The industry and government have worked together to implement the findings, and to increase the flexibility of the biosecurity inspection and certification program.

"This included the introduction of Authorised Officers that allow inspections at a time more suited to exporters.

"The transparency of the new system also means we have a clear understanding of who paid fees, and how much, which means providing a refund will be relatively simple," said Mr Honey.

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**Further information:**

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*Grain Trade Australia* develops the grain standards and contracts that are used across the Australian grain industry and has over 250 member organisations ranging from regional family businesses to large national and international trading/storage and handling companies.

Members operate within all sectors of the grain industry in Australia. Organisations involved in related commercial activities such as banking, communications, grain advisory services and professional services (solicitors and accountants) are also members.